United Nations S/PV.6674

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6674th meeting

Monday, 5 December 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Mr. Alzate
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

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11-62085 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ismaël Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti; His Excellency Mr. Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, President of the Republic of Somalia; His Excellency Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; His Excellency Mr. Moses Wetangula, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya; and His Excellency Mr. Mull Katende, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the African Union, who are taking part in today's meeting via video teleconference from Addis Ababa.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ismaël Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti.

President Guelleh (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, and other Council members for having made this exchange today possible. I have twice come to brief the Council on the situation prevailing in our region, in particular in my country, since Eritrea's aggression against my country in June 2008. As is already known, that country has long denied the existence of any border conflict between our two countries, and has continued to give misleading and arrogant responses to our efforts to resolve our disputes diplomatically and peacefully.

Despite the irresponsible attitude of the Eritrean regime, the Djibouti Government and people, who are peace-loving and eager to have the best possible relations with all neighbouring countries, positively welcomed the mediation agreement proposed by our Qatari friend and signed it on 6 June 2010 under the auspices of the Emir of Qatar, His Highness the dear Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

Unfortunately, the signing of that agreement and the efforts of our Qatari friend did not deflect the Eritrea regime from its hostilities towards my country. Worse, it flagrantly and systematically continued its destabilization activities by kidnapping and the forced military training of young Djiboutians, who then infiltrated northern Djibouti in order to carry out terrorist attacks on our land.

My country is convinced of the virtues of dialogue and mediation. However, we will not allow the Eritrean regime to violate our territorial integrity or to launch terrorist attacks on our territory with impunity. We have concrete information on Eritrean terrorist activities. In particular, we have arrested rebels trained and sent by the Eritrean regime to destabilize our country. Moreover, we also found weapons that that same regime tried to send into the northern part of the territory, again as part of its destabilization attempt. My Government immediately conveyed that information to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union and United Nations.

The deafening, three-year silence on the fate of our prisoners is completely intolerable and unacceptable. Article 3 of the mediation agreement stipulates that the two parties make available to mediators all information on the disappeared soldiers, on the one hand, and the various appeals of the international community, on the other. My Government was prompt to do that by inviting, in particular, the International Committee of the Red Cross to come and meet the Eritrean prisoners and deserters.

However, the dishonest and untrue remarks of the Eritrean regime, which had long stated, even sworn, not to have detained any of the 19 Djiboutian prisoners, were contradicted by the escape on 4 September of two Djiboutian soldiers, reported disappeared the night of 10 June 2008. They escaped from detention camps in Eritrea and reached the Sudan on foot. They were then transferred to Djibouti by the friendly Sudanese Government, which we would like to thank here. To date, Djibouti remains without news of the other 17 Djiboutian prisoners of war.

Such behaviour is unacceptable and reflects the complete refusal of Eritrea to abide by international norms and obligations. My Government therefore demands the immediate and unconditional freedom of the Djiboutian prisoners of war held by Eritrea.

Furthermore, my Government demands that that regime immediately refrain from involving itself in the unrest in the north of our territory.

The report of the Monitoring Group on the implementation of resolutions 1844 (2008) and 1907 (2009) is conclusive (see S/2011/433). Must I recall that the report was submitted to the Council in June? Eritrea not only threatens the peace and stability of the countries of the Horn of Africa, but also continues to flout the international community by directly supporting the acts of terrorism of Al-Shabaab. After three years of silence, denials and lies, the authorities of Eritrea seem to be moving heaven and Earth in the face of economic sanctions by wanting to explain itself before the Council. The sole purpose of that is to avoid sanctions by, as always, trying to be seen as a victim.

The conclusions on Eritrea's actions are clear and indisputable. We have given the Eritrean authorities more than ample opportunity to agree to dialogue and negotiation, but in vain. Their decision has been taken. As for their choice, it is very clear, as they continue to ignore the persistent calls of the Security Council and the regional organizations.

In conclusion, I call on all members of the Council to support the new draft resolution presented on behalf of the countries of IGAD (S/2011/744). The draft resolution seeks to remind Eritrea that the international community will never accept that the regime continues to destabilize and terrorize the countries of the subregion. Given that the weapons embargo and targeted sanctions of previous resolutions seem unable to contain the ongoing and acute aggression and hostility of the Eritrean regime, we hope that this latest draft resolution will help to better monitor it. Therefore, it is essential that members of the Security Council be vigilant and, in particular, aware of the threat that that regime poses to the stability of our subregion. It needs to live in peace with its neighbours, rejoin IGAD and stop the destabilization and interference in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries. That is all that we, the Djiboutian Government and friendly country of the region, demand of Eritrea.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank President Guelleh for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed Sheikh Sharif Sheik, President of the Republic of Somalia.

President Ahmed (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to greet all members of the Security Council and your presidency, Sir, and we thank you for having given us this opportunity to speak.

The Security Council knows how much the Somali people are suffering from terrorist groups. The Somali Government has, as far as possible, tried to reconcile with those groups. However, the support that they receive from the Eritrean regime has prevented reconciliation.

The Council is also aware of our previous relations with President Afwerki. We know that he has no desire to promote calm in the region until he has fulfilled his own expectations and ambitions. Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida receive political, logistical and financial support from the Eritrean Government. Such support arrives by sea and air. It is known that Hassan Dahir Aweys himself was in Asmara. He then moved to Somalia by aeroplane. That shows that the Eritrean regime has the ability to deliver assistance that is used by Al-Shabaab directly from Asmara to Somalia. It is also well known that Somalia has no direct borders with Eritrea, and has not had bad relations with Eritrea in the past. In the current circumstances, however, we are suffering from the activities of Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaida and of those providing them with material support from Eritrea. I recall that, on 22 May 2009, Hassan Dahir Aweys himself took to the media to thank the Republic of Eritrea for its direct support.

The Afwerki regime is the only one that does not recognize this Government. The Eritrean Minister of information has declared that he has no objection to this Government. We have tried to resolve our problems with Eritrea by reaching out to some of its friends, including the late Muammar Al-Qadhafi, who called on Eritrea repeatedly to leave Somalia alone and to encourage Al-Shabaab and Hassan Dahir Awey's group to seek reconciliation with the Government so that the situation can calm down. His appeal was explicitly rejected. We have also sought to meet with Eritrea in the context of a conference of the Sahel countries, but Eritrea failed to attend.

When I was elected in 2009, I contacted Muammar Al-Qadhafi and asked him to mediate in order to suppress incipient problems and to convince the President of Eritrea not to intervene in my country. Mr. Al-Qadhafi informed me that his efforts had been

rebuffed, and that the Eritrean President told him clearly that reconciliation with my country was impossible. Furthermore, our embassies in Kenya and elsewhere became aware of certain financial transactions and that military advisers were being dispatched frequently to Somalia to train terrorist elements. They provided these elements with maps and logistical support, and engaged in attacks on the Transitional Federal Government and the African Union forces in my country.

Somalia has no problem whatsoever with Eritrea, but the Eritrean regime insists on terrorizing my people. We have repeatedly tried to overcome the problem through diplomacy and dialogue, which have been rejected. I do not believe that any State in the world besides Eritrea has declared its support for those terrorist organizations. We truly regret the plight of the Eritrean people, but the interests of my country and our neighbours are being harmed by the Eritrean regime. We have therefore joined others in this gathering today, despite the fact that members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development do not usually meet in the absence of a member unless the situation is especially dire. It is my hope that a strong decision will now be taken against the Eritrean regime.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank President Ahmed for his statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Mr. Zenawi (Ethiopia): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Council for giving us this unique opportunity to express our concerns at the regional level and as individual countries. I shall speak today in my capacities as the current Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia. I really have nothing much to add to what my colleagues have already said, but I wish to highlight a few points.

First, we as a region are not complaining about the domestic policies of the Eritrean Government. We may or may not like those policies, but that is not the issue we wish to raise before the Security Council. Our agenda is to address the fact that Eritrea is a prime source of instability for the region as a whole.

The second point that I wish to highlight is the fact that this is not a family quarrel between Ethiopia and Eritrea. All States members of IGAD, including the Republic of South Sudan, which joined us recently, are represented here today to express the joint opinion that Eritrea is the primary source of instability in our region.

Of course, Ethiopia itself also has a problem with Eritrea, which began when Eritrea invaded our territory. That is not an allegation made by Ethiopia; it is the finding of a neutral arbitral tribunal that was established by Ethiopia and Eritrea. The arbitral tribunal decided that Eritrea had indeed invaded Ethiopia without provocation and should therefore pay compensation. A boundary commission was established and has pronounced itself on the matter. A delimitation decision has been taken, and we in Ethiopia have accepted it without precondition. We may or may not like the delimitation decision itself, but we have made it officially and abundantly clear that we accept it unconditionally.

The Eritreans claim that the boundary commission has actually demarcated the boundary on the map. As a famous Foreign Minister of a permanent member of the Security Council told our Foreign Minister, the demarcation of boundaries on maps is a legal fiction, and a very dangerous one. What we have therefore asked the Eritreans to do is to engage us in dialogue so that we can move towards demarcation. That is what Nigeria and Cameroon did; they engaged in dialogue to implement a delimitation decision. That is what grown-up people should do. That, and nothing more, is what we have asked of Eritrea.

That is the sum total of the so-called border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is not a family quarrel because it did not start with Ethiopia. Eritrea first invaded the Hanish Islands of Yemen. Its policy is one of shoot first, start talking later. It invaded our territory, and then started talking. It invaded Djibouti's territory, denied that it had invaded that territory, and in the end admitted that it had invaded that territory by withdrawing its troops and allowing Qatari troops to replace them.

This is not just about borders. In 1995, just one year after it had achieved its formal independence, Eritrea had a quarrel with the Government of the Sudan; it closed the Sudanese embassy in Asmara, gave it to the South Sudanese opposition, and publically

stated that it would arm and train any opposition that was prepared to remove the regime in Khartoum. It has characterized the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia as a puppet regime, and has openly and repeatedly held conferences with armed opposition groups of Somalia, including Al-Shabaab, in order to try to destabilize Somalia. It is not a family quarrel; it is a regional problem. It is not a question of lack of communication; it is a problem of the attitude of a certain clique in Asmara that has never grown up from being a rebel group. It is a problem of lawlessness and reckless disregard for international norms.

We ask the Security Council to help us to stop that lawlessness because, as it is, the Horn of Africa is a very fragile region. In the absence of the rule of law and action by the Security Council, the implication would be that we are all on our own and that we have to defend ourselves or perish. That is not a choice that we want to make. We believe in the rule of law. We believe in the mandate of the Security Council. We believe that the Security Council can, and must, act.

The Council has a draft resolution before it. We in IGAD have been very actively involved in its preparation. We would like to thank our African brothers in the Security Council, in particular Gabon and Nigeria, for working with us very closely in the drafting process and in its presentation to the Council. I am personally disappointed that many of the teeth of the draft resolution were subsequently removed. But I am convinced that, even as it is, it will convey the right message. We therefore appeal to the members of the Council, individually and collectively, to ensure that the message that the clique in Asmara gets is that it cannot continue to destabilize the region without any consequences. We ask the Council to act and to do so decisively.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to Mr. Moses Wetangula, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya.

Mr. Wetangula (Kenya): I speak on behalf of President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya who, regrettably, could not join his brothers at this very critical debate in the Security Council.

The imperative for the Security Council to focus sharp attention on Eritrea could not come at a better time. The Council is arguably the most important custodian of world peace and security. Kenya joins the Presidents who spoke ahead of me in placing our case before the Security Council — a case that is not new. We are simply asking for an enhancement of the sentence and punishment already meted out on the offending party.

In the past couple of years, the region of the Horn of Africa has experienced serious peace and security challenges. Indeed, the United Nations and the African Union (AU) have partnered with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), our regional organization, to face some of those challenges. IGAD has been a very serious and committed player in that regard. However, we regret that one of our members, who has since disengaged from membership, namely, Eritrea, continues to engage in activities that are inconsistent with, and hostile to, the peace efforts that we all are interested in. As it is now, the region is not coming to the Security Council for the first time; neither should the argument that we have bypassed the AU hold any water. The Security Council is already seized of this matter. The Council is simply being asked to review, enhance and enforce a sentence already passed on the offending party.

My country, Kenya, alongside other countries of the region, has a whole raft of issues we can place before the Council — indeed they have been placed before the Council — that are linked to the activities of destruction of our neighbour. Eritrea. As you know, Mr. President, Kenya has suffered a series of terrorist attacks — on the American Embassy in 1998, as well attacks on our tourist installations and kidnappings committed by Al-Shabaab. What do we get from our neighbour Eritrea? It says that Al-Shabaab does not constitute a significant threat in the region. Since Kenya launched Operation Protect the Nation, on 16 October, in conjunction with forces from the Transitional Federal Government, to try to clean up the Al-Shabaab menace in the region, we have evidence that Eritrea has supplied arms, ammunition and other logistics to Al-Shabaab. This is truly a hostile and enemy act by a country that ought to be an active member of IGAD.

It should not be forgotten that it is on the record that, two or three years ago, Kenya was forced to expel an Eritrean diplomat in Nairobi after establishing beyond any doubt that this diplomat was a critical link between supplies of ammunition, arms and explosive-making materials from his country to Mogadishu, sometimes through Kenya. Those materials had the effect of being used to kill and maim troops of the

African Union Mission in Somalia, innocent civilians, women and children, some going about their legitimate business in local markets in Mogadishu.

Kenya has suffered, including today when an explosion in the Dadaab refugee camp, which is run by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, killed a policeman and injured several refugees. After each of those violent incidents, what we normally get is Al-Shabaab saying that it lauds the heroic acts and that more will come. It has even said that the skyscrapers of Nairobi are now legitimate targets. Yet, Eritrea first of all says that Al-Shabaab does not pose a significant threat to any country in the region.

It is now time for the Security Council to take cognizance of and act on the draft resolution that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development has placed before it in document S/2011/744, which is unanimously supported by all countries and will in some small way help to bring Eritrea to order. I have no doubt that the Council has the will, the means and the capacity to do even more than the region is requesting. It may be too little, too late, but we believe that a step in the right direction is a step in support of peace and security in the region, of which the Security Council is the ultimate custodian.

Once again, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to speak to the Council, and I fully support and endorse the statements made by my senior colleagues, the Presidents who have spoken before me, and urge you and the Council to realize that a failure to act today to sanction Eritrea in the manner requested — albeit somewhat watered down — is perhaps to add a feather to the cap of impunity. And that will not help the region in any way.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda, His Excellency Mr. Mull Katende.

Mr. Katende (Uganda): Uganda has been part of the decisions taken by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union concerning the situation in Somalia and the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea. Uganda remains committed to those decisions and hopes that the Security Council will respond positively to the requests made to it by IGAD and the African Union, including taking measures against all those countries, organizations and individuals identified as being directly or indirectly involved in providing human, financial or technical support to Al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam militias and terrorists in the Horn of Africa.

We are particularly concerned because of what has happened to us in the past. We are also concerned, because we have troops in Somalia and with the African Union Mission in Somalia. We want those troops to do their job, accomplish that job and return home safely.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no more speakers inscribed on my list. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6674 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6674th meeting

Monday, 5 December 2011, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukašinović
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Mr. Alzate
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/744, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Gabon and Nigeria. It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The States of the Horn of Africa and other members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) — in particular Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya and Uganda — have drawn the Council's attention to Eritrea's destabilizing activities in the subregion. Concerned about the situation, IGAD, as a subregional group, has on several occasions addressed itself to the presidency of the Security Council, in particular on 8 August.

Despite the appeals of the international community and the African Union, Eritrea has continued to fail to comply with, or implement, the relevant United Nations resolutions. For that reason, and to prevent further aggravation of tensions, IGAD has called on the Council to impose new sanctions. IGAD States have all along emphasized the need to create the conditions for lasting peace in the subregion, and any initiative to that end is therefore welcome.

In response to urgent appeals from countries of the Horn of Africa, Gabon, as an African member of the Security Council, decided to co-sponsor a draft resolution on further sanctions against Eritrea. Our commitment is also based on the decision adopted at the fourteenth ordinary session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government in January 2010, in which the African Union emphasized the need to vigorously set about implementing resolution 1907 (2009). It also called on Eritrea immediately to comply with the demands of resolutions 1862 (2009) and 1907 (2009), and called on the Security Council Sanctions Committee to implement sanctions against Eritrean police and military authorities and Eritrean leaders.

The draft resolution before the Security Council for the most part replicates the provisions of resolution 1907 (2009). New measures, contained in paragraphs 9 to 13, are essentially economic measures. Those measures have been focused to take into account the need to avoid possible negative effects on the civilian population.

Gabon therefore solemnly urges the members of the Security Council to respond to IGAD's request by adopting the draft resolution. Beyond its provisions, the draft is designed first and foremost to promote peace and improve security in Africa as a whole, and the subregion of the Horn in particular.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

Abstaining:

China, Russian Federation

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 13 votes in favour, none against and two abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2023 (2011).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): At the outset, let me say that Nigeria approaches all issues related to sanctions with the utmost gravity and consideration. We endeavoured to build consensus on this latest round of sanctions, consistent with our history as a nation that seeks to promote peaceful coexistence among nations. In 2004, as Chair of the African Union, we brought Eritrea and Ethiopia together in Algiers for direct talks aimed at resolving several conflict issues between these neighbours, including the undemarcated border between them.

Two factors informed our decision to co-sponsor resolution 2023 (2011): our unwavering commitment to peace in the Horn of Africa and Nigeria's principled position against global terrorism. We ourselves have been victims of terrorism in the recent past. The deteriorating situation in the region, especially the devastating threat of terrorism that is illuminated by the latest report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia

and Eritrea (see S/2011/433), must not be left unaddressed.

Beyond any sanctions, the opportunity for a political settlement of the myriad challenges facing the region should not be squandered. Eritrea and its neighbours — Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen — must now repair and relaunch their relationships. The current state of suspicion and tension will only serve to undermine regional peace and progress. The Horn of Africa will require, as a matter of priority, the concerted participation and contributions of every Member State, including Eritrea, if it is to achieve comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. In light of this, we encourage Eritrea to comply with the provisions of all relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

Much as the future depends on domestic and regional political will, concerted bilateral international support can also play an important part. Thus, recognizing that in a globalized world the security of all States is intertwined, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union, the United Nations and bilateral partners must now deploy the most serious and concerted efforts to end all conflicts in the region, including border conflicts.

The resolution we have adopted asks no more than that Eritrea fulfil its responsibility to its people as a sovereign nation and live up to its obligations as a State Member of the United Nations. We firmly believe in that possibility.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom continues to be deeply concerned at the situation in the Horn of Africa and the threat to regional and international peace and security. Its people need our support now more than ever if they are to achieve a more stable and prosperous region.

The United Kingdom is concerned about Eritrea's disruptive activities in Somalia and the region, and its non-compliance with Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1907 (2009). The United Kingdom therefore welcomes the adoption of resolution 2023 (2011) today and the further measures it applies. We also note the Council's readiness to consider additional measures if there is evidence of further non-compliance. The measures in the resolution are proportionate, preventative and carefully targeted in order to prevent humanitarian impact, and we fully support them.

The United Kingdom urges Eritrea to comply with this and all other Security Council resolutions. We urge all States of the region to work to resolve conflict, demarcate borders and work together towards political solutions that protect civilians and provide an environment for economic development and regional integration. Given the impact on civilians of the devastating drought in the region and the famine in Somalia, we encourage these States to work together to deliver peace and security.

As resolution 2023 (2011) makes clear, the Secretary-General and the Security Council will keep Eritrea's actions under continuous review, and we shall be prepared to adjust the measures in the light of Eritrea's future compliance or non-compliance with Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): The situation in the Horn of Africa region and the role of Eritrea therein led to the adoption of resolution 1907 (2009) in December 2009, imposing sanctions on Eritrea. These sanctions have never been an end in themselves, and have not aimed at punishing the Eritrean people. Their purpose has always been to engage Eritrea in finding a peaceful solution to its problems with its neighbours.

Unfortunately, Eritrea has failed to comply with the main provisions of resolution 1907 (2009), as outlined in great detail in the report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (see S/2011/433) and confirmed by the representatives of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) this morning. We are concerned that the country continues to support armed opposition groups throughout the region, especially in Somalia. Moreover, Eritrea continues on its path to self-isolation, and has halted its cooperation with the United Nations and other organizations, such as the European Union.

The Security Council and its Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) discussed at length and in great depth the necessary reactions and the scope and content of a reinforced sanctions regime. Resolution 2023 (2011), which has just been adopted, bears in mind the fate of the people of Eritrea. It is calibrated and takes into account the difficult humanitarian situation in the region. It does not impose new economic sanctions or increase the burden of the Eritrean people; rather, it demands more transparency from Eritrea and calls on

those doing business with the country to make sure that funds are not used for illegitimate purposes. Resolution 2023 (2011) sends a clear political message to Eritrea that it must stop all activity that destabilizes the region, and it must cooperate with its neighbours.

In return, we call on the neighbours of Eritrea to cooperate in good faith with that country. In this respects, all forums and platforms — first and foremost, the regional organizations — should be used. We encourage IGAD to swiftly decide on Eritrea's request to reactivate its membership.

Mr. Mashabane (South Africa): The Horn of Africa faces serious challenges of instability and volatility, including threats to peace and security in Africa in general. The instability, coupled with famine, has resulted in a humanitarian crisis with dire consequences for the population of the region.

South Africa acknowledges and appreciates the important and critical role being played by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union are playing in the fight against armed groups and the spread of terrorism in the region. We condemn any acts by Eritrea that destabilize the region. In ensuring peace and stability that lead to the development of the region, South Africa calls on Eritrea to fully address the allegations and reports of possible support for and association with Al-Shabaab.

Two years ago, following the African Union's request, the Security Council adopted resolution 1907 (2009) in response to reports of Eritrea's role in destabilizing the region. In the implementation of the resolution, South Africa is of the view that equal attention should be given to engagement in a political process. South Africa hopes that the additional measures contained in today's resolution will not have a negative impact on the people of Eritrea or their livelihoods. We also hope that these measures and sanctions will not adversely impact the economy of Eritrea. Our proposed contribution to the resolution was to ensure that it was balanced with more clarity, did not impose collective punishment on ordinary people in Eritrea and did not contain blanket measures that would have dire consequences.

We call on the Monitoring Group to execute its responsibilities and mandate emanating from resolution 1907 (2009) and from this resolution with professionalism, impartiality and objectivity. The Monitoring Group should never be influenced by political considerations outside of its mandate. It is important for the Monitoring Group to closely guard its independence and professionalism in the work it does to assist the Security Council with the implementation of those measures. Equally, we call upon the members of the Security Council to desist from any temptation to use the Monitoring Group for political ends.

South Africa calls for the full implementation of resolution 1907 (2009). We have taken note of the fact that in the past two years, following years of self-imposed isolation, Eritrea has started a process of re-engagement with the international community and the African Union. We also welcome Eritrea's expressed desire to rejoin IGAD.

South Africa is of the strong view that sanctions should not be viewed as an end in themselves, but should complement a political process. In that regard, a political process remains critical to ensuring lasting peace in the Horn of Africa. The African Union heads of State Summit held in Malabo in July reiterated concern about the continued impasse in the peace process in that region. The African Union committed itself to assisting the countries of the region to peacefully resolve their disputes and normalize relations. We therefore continue to emphasize the importance of the centrality of an African solution to resolving African problems. In line with paragraph 2 of resolution 2023 (2011), which we have just adopted, we call on all the concerned parties in the region to work with the African Union to peacefully resolve their long-standing disputes.

South Africa supports the principle that the Security Council must always afford Member States an opportunity to be heard when their issues are addressed by the Council. We therefore appreciate the statements made this morning by the political leadership of IGAD. We are disappointed that Eritrea was not afforded an equal opportunity to address the Council today. The manner in which the Council dealt with a request by a State Member of the United Nations — in this case, Eritrea — leaves much to be desired. It is our strong view that the Council should be more sensitive and considerate when dealing with heads of State whose countries are the subject of its consideration.

We voted in favour of today's resolution in the hope that it will contribute to addressing the challenges of instability in the Horn of Africa and support the

efforts of IGAD and the African Union in consolidating peace and security in the region.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has closely followed the situation in the Horn of Africa and understands the concerns of the relevant countries about the security situation in the region. We oppose all words and acts that may jeopardize regional peace and stability.

China always supports the settlement of African issues in African ways by Africa. We stand for solidarity among African countries and for the appropriate settlement of their disputes through dialogue and negotiation. We hope that the African Union and other regional organizations will play a positive role in that regard. We will continue to firmly support the constructive efforts made by the relevant countries and regional organizations to maintain peace in the region. We will also continue to do what we can to offer our assistance.

China has all along adopted a prudent attitude towards sanctions, as we believe that, rather than achieving the expected results, sanctions may often lead to further complication of a situation and affect the economic development and livelihoods of the people in the countries in question. For that reason, China abstained in the voting on resolution 1907 (2009), which the Council adopted in 2009. China believes that the relevant actions by the Security Council with regard to the Horn of Africa should be conducive to improving relations among the countries of the region, the settling of disputes by the parties concerned through dialogue and negotiation, and the maintenance of regional peace and stability.

In the context of that basic principle, China took an active and constructive role in consultations on the resolution. Some of the amendments proposed by China are reflected in the text of the resolution. However, we believe that there is still room for improvement. Regrettably, the rush to vote on the resolution resulted in its ultimate failure to reflect some of the major legitimate concerns of many members of the Security Council, including China. For example, the implementation of due diligence guidelines has not yet reached maturity, and the impact of its implementation on other issues has yet to be seen. The Security Council's Sanctions Committee should have studied and explored the issue further.

It is for those reasons that China abstained in the voting on resolution 2023 (2011), which the Council has just adopted.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): Lebanon would like to reiterate the importance of preserving the territorial unity and integrity of countries and abiding by the principle of non-aggression and non-interference in their internal affairs. We therefore once again express our full support for the Djibouti peace process and the Transitional Federal Charter, which provide the appropriate framework for reaching a lasting political agreement in Somalia. We also welcome the 9 June Kampala agreement and the road map agreed by the parties on 6 September.

Lebanon would like once again to reiterate its satisfaction with Qatar's continued mediation efforts to resolve the border conflict between Djibouti and Eritrea. We also thank Qatar for having deployed troops to the border between the two countries.

We commend the positive developments that have taken place, including the withdrawal of Eritrean forces. We call for continuing efforts to achieve objectives, in particular with regard to the Eritrea/Djibouti Border Commission and the issue of prisoners of war and missing persons. We call for compliance with resolution 1862 (2009), of 14 January 2009, as well as the agreement reached at Doha by the Governments of Djibouti and Eritrea on 6 June 2010.

However, we reiterate our great concern about the contents of the 18 July report (see S/2011/433) of the Somalia/Eritrea Monitoring Group in connection with Eritrea's actions in the Horn of Africa region, especially its support for Somali rebels. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development and leaders of neighbouring countries have issued reports of Eritrea's persistent efforts to destabilize the region — a matter that heightens our concerns. We therefore call upon Eritrea to resolve the current problems through negotiation and cooperation with IGAD, the African Union and the United Nations, and we support the draft resolution submitted by Gabon, which is backed by IGAD, as it provides a clear message of the need to implement all United Nations resolutions, to respect the principles of good neighbourliness and to deal with all pending issues through dialogue in order to strengthen peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): The United States welcomes the Council's decision to impose new sanctions on Eritrea. Today we have sent a clear message to the Government of Eritrea that it must cease all illegal actions threatening international peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.

In adopting this resolution, we should recall the events that led us to this decision. Exactly two years ago this month, the Council adopted resolution 1907 (2009) in response to a disturbing pattern of behaviour. Eritrea was not engaging constructively in resolving its border dispute with Djibouti and most alarmingly, it was providing political, financial and logistical support to armed groups seeking to undermine peace in Somalia. The Council imposed targeted sanctions on Eritrea to demonstrate that Eritrea's actions were unacceptable and would have negative consequences.

That was two years ago. What has happened since? As we have heard again this morning, we have continued to receive evidence of Eritrean support for extremist groups in the region. Eritrea still has not resolved its border dispute with Djibouti. The United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea has documented Eritrea's support for terrorism, including an appalling planned attack on the January 2011 African Union summit in Addis Ababa. According to the Monitoring Group, Eritrea is financing all of those activities through illicit means, including threats and the extortion of a diaspora tax from people of Eritrean descent living overseas.

In direct response, the Council has today imposed tougher sanctions. Our goal is to show Eritrea that it will pay an ever higher price for its actions. Building on resolution 1907 (2009), the resolution just adopted imposes new obligations on Eritrea, including the obligation to cease illicit practices aimed at extorting funds from its diaspora.

We particularly welcome the Council's expression of concern over the potential use of mining revenues to fund violations of Security Council resolutions. The United States will work with the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea and the Sanctions Committee regarding Somalia and Eritrea to develop voluntary guidelines for companies from the United States and other Member States. Such guidelines could provide useful advice, best practices and information to help companies protect themselves from inadvertently contributing to Eritrea's violations. We intend to draw on that work in advising our own companies.

In addition to the obligations set forth in this and in previous United Nations resolutions, today's resolution 2023 (2011) provides further opportunities for Eritrea to show its good faith, including by releasing information on the status of Djiboutian combatants missing in action since June 2008. Eritrea must cease all direct and indirect efforts to destabilize States, particularly through support for armed opposition and terrorist groups, and it should cooperate fully with the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea.

We hope that this tightening of sanctions will finally convince the Government of Eritrea to reorder its priorities. The United States believes that the international community's concerns can and should be resolved through political engagement and dialogue. But Eritrea must clearly and affirmatively prove, not through its words but through its actions, that it is ready to re-emerge as a law-abiding State.

Until that time, the Council and United Nations Member States are committed to enforcing robustly the sanctions we have applied. We hope that Eritrea will not squander this second chance to change course.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): Two years ago in December 2009, the Council adopted resolution 1907 (2009), which established a sanctions regime against Eritrea. Those sanctions were decided upon to deal with Eritrea's provision of support to armed groups that were destabilizing Somalia and as a resuly of its refusal to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve its border dispute with the Republic of Djibouti. For two years, despite the appeals of the international community, the Eritrean authorities have failed to meet the expectations of the Security Council. On the contrary, the information contained in the most recent report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (S/2011/433) of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea is a source of concern. Notably, the report indicates that Eritrea is continuing to carry out destabilizing activities in several States in the Horn of Africa.

Moreover, Eritrea has shown neither good faith nor the will necessary to find a peaceful solution to the border conflict with the Republic of Djibouti. Indeed, it

has done absolutely nothing to resolve the issue of prisoners of war, which constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law.

Given the absence of any constructive gesture from Eritrea and given that we heard this morning concerns voiced at the very highest level by the States members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, a gradual strengthening of sanctions is justified. That is the purpose of the resolution introduced by Gabon and Nigeria, and we thank them for having represented Africa in this African crisis.

We have ensured that the resolution will have no impact on the population of Eritrea. Its text expresses the concern of the international community at the activities of the Eritrean authorities in violation of international law and Security Council decisions, and it is intended to bring such actions to an end.

The sanctions decided upon by the Council can be reversed. Hence, we call upon Eritrea to commit itself with no further delay to an open approach. That would involve putting an end to activities that are destabilizing neighbouring countries and resuming resolute dialogue in good faith with its neighbours, in particular the Republic of Djibouti under the auspices of Qatar's mediation efforts.

The President: I will now make a statement in my national capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

The Russian delegation abstained in the voting on the resolution of the Security Council submitted by Gabon and Nigeria on strengthening sanctions against Eritrea. However, we understand the many concerns expressed today in the statements by the representatives of member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The text of the resolution contains a range of provisions that lack adequate foundation, and the role of the group of experts has been expanded beyond measure. In that respect we refer in particular to the "planned terrorist attack" in Addis Ababa during the African Union summit there. The Russian Federation is categorically against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. However, in this case, the Security Council was not presented with convincing proof of Eritrea's involvement in that incident.

We have not seen the results of any investigation of that incident, if indeed there was one. We also have doubts with respect to the provision in the resolution that gives the Sanctions Committee a mandate to draft, with the support of the expert group, guiding principles for States on maintaining vigilance in their cooperation with Eritrea in the mining sector. When it comes to guiding United Nations Members, guidance should be provided by a resolution of the Security Council and not by the preliminary work of subsidiary bodies, as that can lead to various interpretations of resolutions that have been adopted.

Practical implementation of the provisions of the resolution regarding the Eritrean diaspora raises further questiond. In general, we are concerned by a trend in the recent work of the Council of including ambiguous language in the texts of draft resolutions, which impedes their implementation in practice. It should be noted that resorting to sanctions should be seen as an extreme measure. It is very important that we exhaust the political and diplomatic means available before resorting to sanctions.

We believe that settlement of the problem in the Horn of Africa involves establishing a broad and multifaceted dialogue among the countries of the region. We call upon Eritrea and its neighbours to openly and transparently discuss all of the key issues in an effort to improve the situation in that area of the African continent.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6675

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6675th meeting

Tuesday, 6 December 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Alzate
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

First report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2001 (2011) (S/2011/736)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-62375 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

First report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2001 (2011) (S/2011/736)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/736, which contains the first report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2001 (2011).

I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler. Since this is Mr. Kobler's first appearance before the Security Council, I should like to extend him a particularly warm welcome and wish him success in his work.

Mr. Kobler: It is a great pleasure and an honour for me to be here today. I would like to thank you, Sir, for having invited me to introduce the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/736) on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and to brief the Council on the latest developments in that country.

I am also grateful for the Secretary-General's decision, with your support, to entrust me with the responsibility of leading the activities of the United Nations in Iraq at a particularly historic moment. Like my predecessors, I look forward to fulfilling the mandate this Council has entrusted to UNAMI, in close cooperation with the Iraqi authorities. In that regard, I would like to express my deep and sincere appreciation to Iraqi leaders for their warm and cordial welcome and interaction thus far.

Let me begin by condemning in the strongest possible terms yesterday's terrorist attack on Ashura pilgrims, which killed dozens and injured many more. My condolences go to the families of the victims. Iraqi religious and ethnic diversity is the ultimate strength of the country. That diversity is at the heart of the country's efforts to establish a peaceful, prosperous and all-inclusive society.

It has been almost two months since I took up my assignment in Iraq — a country I left four years ago in a different capacity and under very different circumstances. Since my arrival, I have met with many Arab and Kurdish political and religious leaders, including in Najaf, to take the pulse of the country. I have visited all UNAMI hubs in Erbil, Kirkuk and Basra to better familiarize myself with the activities of the Mission and of the United Nations country team. Finally, on 23 and 24 November I travelled to Kuwait to discuss the outstanding issues and points of common interest between Iraq and Kuwait.

During that initial period, I must say that I witnessed a great number of changes and improvements, and despite many obstacles ahead there is significant degree of good will and determination to achieve further progress. Yet, I also came to realize that some of the pressing challenges of yesterday remain the same today. They are covered in greater detail in the report of the Secretary-General, and include wealth distribution, power-sharing, delivery and access to basic services, strained relations between communities that have lived together in Iraq for centuries, and unresolved issues between Iraq and Kuwait.

Today, I would like to focus on the following five areas: first, the significance of the withdrawal of United States forces from Iraq for the Iraqi people and the United Nations; secondly, the current political situation; thirdly, United Nations activities on the ground; fourthly, the possible impact in Iraq of events unfolding in the region and the state of affairs between Iraq and Kuwait; and last but not least, the issue of Camp Ashraf, which has monopolized much of the attention and efforts of UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) attention over the past several months.

The withdrawal of the United States forces from Iraq by the end of the year will lead to a remarkable change for the Government and the people of Iraq. It

will also be an important milestone in Iraq's history as the country rebuilds and strengthens its relations with regional and international partners. Yes, there will be challenges ahead and many seem concerned by what the future may entail. However, it is above all an opportunity for all Iraqis to prove to themselves and to the world that they can build a peaceful and better future for their children, and an opportunity for all political leaders and elected official to respond to the legitimate aspirations of their constituencies and bring democracy, political stability and economic prosperity forward.

UNAMI and the United Nations country team stand ready to work with the Government and redouble its efforts to consolidate the country's democratic gains and economic recovery. The United Nations has a proven track record in assisting to build up strong institutions and mechanisms for good governance, including in the fight against corruption. I am pleased that Prime Minister Al-Maliki himself has made this topic one of his Government's priorities. I look forward to building upon the work that has already been done, especially with regard to human rights and electoral and legislative support, all of which could contribute to fostering political stability in the years to come.

The task ahead should not be underestimated and will require further progress on the security front. For several months now, the Iraqi security forces have assumed full control of the security of the country. However, they continue to face armed opposition and terrorist groups carrying out complex mass-casualty attacks that affect the lives of hundreds of citizen across the country. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, they also pose significant challenges to the delivery of United Nations assistance on the ground.

Let me now turn to the latest political developments. As Iraq makes further progress in regaining its rightful place in the community of nations, it is even more crucial that its leaders from all sides work collectively to overcome their differences and promote confidence and tolerance. In my consultations, in particular with Kurdish interlocutors, I have sensed a growing discontent at delays in fully implementing the Kurdish-Arab agenda. As called for by the Secretary-General in his report, Iraqi leaders should take the steps necessary to overcome the current stand still in the appointment of security ministers and to resolve other pending issues regarding the Government formation process.

Arab-Kurd relations and issues pertaining to disputed internal boundaries have always been at the core of UNAMI's mandate. They represent a major element in the country's stability and remain one of UNAMI's top priorities. I am pleased that Prime Minister Al-Maliki has asked me for UNAMI's continued involvement and assistance on this matter. To this end, we are currently exploring ways to reinvigorate the standing consultative mechanism as a forum for addressing the issues of the disputed internal boundaries through dialogue.

I have already initiated discussions with all concerned on the issue of Kirkuk, including holding elections and improving security, and a possible third-party role for UNAMI in the combined security mechanism. The recent deployment of the Iraqi Army around the Kirkuk airport was viewed with concern by leaders of the Kurdistan Regional Government and further underlined the need to ensure that the necessary mechanisms are in place for settling disputes. In this regard, I call upon the parties involved to use existing mechanisms to avoid confrontation and to provide the necessary space for UNAMI to assist.

After the withdrawal of the United States forces from Iraq, it will be of particular importance that democratic standards, including respect for the rule of law in relation to electoral processes and human rights, be safeguarded and further advanced. There must be no rollback.

The transparency and professionalism of future electoral processes are essential to ensuring that Iraqi citizens accept the results. Iraq has a busy electoral calendar ahead, for which a professional and independent electoral commission is essential. The appointment of the new Board of Commissioners of the Independent High Electoral Commission, to be completed by April 2012, will be the foundation of the credibility of all upcoming elections. I am pleased to report that the Council of Representatives has formally requested UNAMI to perform an advisory role in the selection process of the next Board of Commissioners.

I turn now to the situation of human rights. Much has still to be done to address the difficulties faced by all Iraqis in their daily lives. Every month, an average of 600 to 800 incidents, resulting in at least 10 civilian deaths per day and many more injuries, continue to be

reported. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the victims of these atrocious acts, and I call on the Government of Iraq to do everything in its power to protect the victims of violence and to ensure that those who perpetrate such acts are held accountable according to law.

More specifically, the confirmed recent killing of a human rights activist by an improvised explosive device attached to his car in Kirkuk on 20 November brings the number of reported violent incidents against human rights defenders to 11 since the beginning of October. Of equal concern are attempts against freedom of expression — a fundamental right in all democracies. During the reporting period, journalists continued to be the targets of attacks. UNAMI's Office of Human Rights continues, together with the Government of Iraq, to follow up each and every individual case. They will be included in the Mission's upcoming regular report on the situation of human rights in Iraq.

On the development side, the United Nations country team's partnership with the Government continues in the implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The Government's efforts to allocate a specific line of funding for development projects within its investment budget for 2012 demonstrate its commitment to supporting the country's key development priorities. The United Nations stands ready to provide the Government with support in implementing those priorities.

With respect to integrated development priorities, UNAMI will in the coming months focus on three issues with political, security and governance implications: youth, water resource management and environment. I strongly believe that these provide opportunities for a cross-cutting impact across Iraq's critical development challenges. They are at the core of Iraq's potential to realize sustainable development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

I would also like to focus on question of improving the situation of women. Specifically, I will focus my efforts on three priority activities: first, promoting the participation of women and their role in building Iraq's sustainable and peaceful future; secondly, combating all forms of violence against women and girls; and thirdly, promoting education for women and girls, including vocational training.

Democratic and economic development can prosper only in a stable regional environment and Iraq's stability depends on good-relations with its neighbours. Those relations, however, could be significantly affected by various unfolding events in the region.

As mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, tensions escalated in northern Iraq following the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) terrorist attacks on 19 October against Turkish forces in the south-eastern province of Hakkari, which resulted in the deplorable loss of 24 lives and led to subsequent air and ground offensives by Turkish forces against PKK terrorists in Iraqi Kurdistan. Despite that difficult situation, the Governments of Turkey and Iraq, together with the Kurdistan Regional Government authorities, have proactively engaged in constructive crisis management. To date, those mitigating efforts have proven successful, and I would like to thank all concerned for those efforts.

As one can easily imagine, unfolding events in Syria are of concern to many of my interlocutors, who fear possible repercussions in Iraq. A contingency plan has been prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with a view to addressing any movement of population into Iraq and is being regularly updated to take into consideration the fluid situation in Syria.

Of particular importance are the relations between Iraq and Kuwait. Both countries share a difficult past. The 2009 report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/385) envisaged a road map for the normalization of Iraq's international status. There has been, however, little progress. In my recent discussions with the Iraqi Government, I have encouraged them to quickly implement Iraq's outstanding Chapter VII obligations, as outlined in that road map. That in turn would open the door for the early normalization of Iraq's status in the international community by the Security Council, which is now long overdue.

Further efforts are therefore needed to promote confidence between the two countries and facilitate solutions to deal with outstanding bilateral issues. I am encouraged by the resolve that both Iraq and Kuwait have demonstrated to improve bilateral relations, particularly through reciprocal high-level visits earlier this year and the establishment of a Joint Ministerial Working Committee. I hope that following the

forthcoming visit of Prime Minister al-Maliki to Kuwait, the two sides will be able to resume the work of the Joint Ministerial Working Committee in the near future.

During my recent meetings with Iraqi leaders, I was encouraged by the goodwill they have expressed towards improving relations with Kuwait. Similarly, during my recent visit to Kuwait, I was encouraged by the goodwill towards Iraq shown by my Kuwaiti interlocutors. While reiterating the importance they attached to a letter from Prime Minister al-Maliki reaffirming Iraq's land and maritime borders, in accordance with resolution 833 (1993), they responded positively to my suggestion that the focus for the time being should be on the implementation of Iraq's Chapter VII obligations on a priority basis, for example, border management projects, maintenance, and compensation and relocation of farmers.

I believe that UNAMI is well placed to help normalize Iraq's relations with Kuwait in the framework of concerted United Nations engagement and with the support of the Security Council. UNAMI and I, personally, stand ready to assist, including by exploring new avenues to address the standstill between the two countries and facilitate progress towards Iraq's full compliance with, and eventual exit from, Chapter VII, while providing Kuwait with the necessary safeguards and assurances it is looking for.

I would now like to draw the Council's attention to the situation with regard to Camp Ashraf, which remains a matter of great concern. The Government of Iraq has asked the United Nations to help facilitate a peaceful and durable solution to the matter, and we are making an exhaustive effort to do so. We believe that such a solution is possible. However, the positions of the Government of Iraq and of the Camp residents and their leadership continue to remain far apart.

The Government of Iraq repeatedly emphasized its intention to close down the camp by 31 December of this year and to transfer its residents to another location until countries are found outside Iraq where they can resettle. That deadline is fast approaching.

The position of Camp Ashraf residents is to remain in the camp until countries are found to receive them. They still do not agree to be transferred to a new location outside the camp without the protection of Blue Helmets.

I am pleased by the progress made so far and by the Government of Iraq's agreement to allow UNHCR to play the role it has under its mandate. The Government of Iraq is also committed to the principle of non-refoulement and gave assurances to the Secretary-General of its commitment to find a peaceful solution. There is, however, a real danger of confrontation and even violence unless a mutually acceptable solution is found. We are therefore calling on all concerned to act with restraint and flexibility to ensure that such a peaceful solution can be found.

The United Nations efforts are being led on the ground by UNAMI and UNHCR. Those efforts have intensified in recent weeks in the context of a working group on Camp Ashraf, which has been meeting frequently with the Government of Iraq. UNAMI continues its regular visits to Camp Ashraf, the most recent of which took place this past weekend. Those visits provide the opportunity to listen to the concerns of the residents and to brief them on the proposals being discussed.

The Secretary-General has spoken personally to Prime Minister al-Maliki to appeal for flexibility and full support for the United Nations efforts to facilitate the peaceful solution the Government has assured that it seeks. He has asked me to attach the highest priority to that issue.

In trying to facilitate a solution, we are emphasizing a number of important points. First, we must keep in mind that lives are at stake and must be protected. The Government has a responsibility to ensure the safety, security and welfare of the residents. Any forced action that results in bloodshed or loss of life would be both ill-advised and unacceptable.

Secondly, we believe that any workable solution must be acceptable to both the Government of Iraq and to the residents of Camp Ashraf. A solution must respect Iraqi sovereignty, on the one hand, and applicable international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law on the other hand.

Thirdly, a solution must also respect the principle of non-refoulement. No resident of Camp Ashraf should be returned to his or her home country without his or her consent.

While some progress has been made in our latest discussions in Baghdad, many obstacles remain to arriving at a plan that would meet the concerns and

requirements of all interested parties. Subject to all conditions being met, UNHCR is ready to begin the verification and interviews for the purposes of refugee status determination. However, the process will take time to complete. Clearly, the situation cannot be fully resolved before 31 December. I therefore appeal to the Government of Iraq to extend the deadline in order to permit adequate time and space for a solution to be found.

I also appeal to the leadership and residents of Camp Ashraf to engage constructively and with an open mind to the proposed process. They should give serious consideration to the proposals under discussion. There should be no provocation or violence from their side nor a challenge to Iraqi sovereignty.

Finally, I appeal to the international community to do more to help. A lasting solution cannot be found unless Governments step forward and offer to accept Camp Ashraf residents for resettlement in their countries. I will be travelling to Brussels today and will emphasize that point, in particular with my interlocutors there. In that context, I also welcome the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to receive those residents of Camp Ashraf who express a desire to voluntarily return to their home country with the assurance that their welfare, security and safety will be respected.

Let me say that the situation of Camp Ashraf is a complex one but that the problems are not insurmountable. A process is under way, and if all concerned act responsibly at this time, it will be possible to arrive at a peaceful, durable solution that respects both the safety, security and welfare of Camp residents and Iraq's understandable desire to assert its sovereignty.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for their continued support. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for the security support provided to the United Nations by the Government of Iraq and the Member States contributing troops and police to UNAMI.

Finally, I would also like to pay tribute to the United Nations national and international staff who work in Iraq, under the most challenging circumstances. I am confident that with their determination and the support of the Council, we can achieve more in Iraq, in line with our mandate. I appreciate, in this context, the openness of all my interlocutors and their stated expectation to see the United Nations engaging with the people and the Government of Iraq to consolidate the significant gains made thus far.

The President: I thank Mr. Kobler for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the repre ative of Iraq.

Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to thank the previous President of the Council, the Permanent Representative of Portugal, for his efforts during the month of November. I also congratulate Mr. Martin Kobler on his assignment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Iraq, and I wish him success in his new position. In addition, I thank Mr. Kobler and his team in Baghdad and New York for their sincere efforts in helping the Government and the people of Iraq.

After reviewing the important points mentioned in the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (S/2011/736), my country's delegation would like to address the following issues.

The political and security situation in Iraq has witnessed tremendous and notable improvements in the past few months. The coming year will bring great challenges and responsibilities for the Iraqi Government after the United States forces withdrawal by the end of this year. However, the strategic framework agreement between Iraq and the United States will underpin the next stage of the relations between the two countries at the political, economic, technical, cultural, and scientific levels.

Here I would like to take this opportunity to thank the United States forces and the United States Government and all the countries that have helped Iraq to bring about democracy, human rights, the rule of law and stability in the country. As Mr. Kobler noted, some of yesterday's challenges are still the same today for Iraq and the Iraqi Government.

Regarding the implementation of the status-of-forces agreement between the United States and Iraq, on 1 October the United States air force transferred control over the Iraqi airspace in the Baghdad/Balad sector to the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority. All air traffic in this area, which is the busiest and most

complicated in Iraq, is now conducted by Iraqi air-traffic controllers. With this step, Iraq has assumed complete control over its airspace, for the first time since 2003. Iraq also took over control of 485 military bases from United States forces as part of the plan for a complete withdrawal by the end of the year.

I would like to inform the Security Council that my Government has worked hard in recent months to improve its defensive capabilities to stand against terrorist attacks, to protect internal security and to save democracy in Iraq. In this context, I would like to point to Mr. Kobler's praise of the improvements in the security situation in Iraq, which are in line with the perceptions of the United Nations about the future of Iraq through 2015.

As part of the successes achieved by the Iraqi security forces since they took charge of security duties in the country, a statement by the Ministry of Health showed that the number of civilians who were killed in acts of violence had decreased to 110 in September 2011, compared with 155 in August 2011. That number represents the second-lowest number of casualties in the space of a month for this year; this shows clearly the huge decrease in violent attacks, which reached their peak in 2006 and 2007.

The Government of Iraq affirms that the duty of officials in all Government sectors is to meet the demands of citizens using all of the capabilities of the Government. Although the Government inherited a bad situation and a heavy burden of debt from the former regime, it is working to alleviate the burden on citizens and to provide them with the best possible services.

The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers in Iraq and the United Nations Development Programme launched the United Nations Global Compact in Iraq on 15 October 2011. The agreement is aimed at empowering the private sector through sustainable collaboration based on the principles of human rights, a sustainable environment and business transparency.

The Iraqi Government is moving forward to solve the electricity crisis in Iraq through a plan that is being implemented at a steady pace. In addition, the Government has taken a number of urgent measures aimed at relieving the intensity of the crisis until a final solution is reached. Those urgent measures include the distribution of additional quantities of fuel to a number of sub-generator units in order to provide a relative level of comfort to citizens, especially during the summer.

My Government asserts that the oil is the property of all Iraqi citizens, and that the duty of the Government is to invest this energy in a way that provides the best return for citizens. In this context, the Southern Gas Company signed an agreement in principle with the Shell and Mitsubishi oil companies on 22 October 2011 to establish a joint company to benefit from the natural gas associated with oil in the province of Basra. That step was taken after decades of wasting the natural gas wealth associated with oil.

The Iraqi oil industry maintained its monthly production levels; crude-oil exports for the month of September 2011 totalled 63.1 million barrels, with average daily exports of 2.1 million barrels. The Oil Ministry is currently aiming to increase its production levels to 2.9 million barrels a day in order to reach this year's goal, which is 3 million barrels a day.

Iraq is witnessing today a new era in which the foundations of democracy, personal and private freedoms, freedom of the press and expression, the freedom to create political parties, political diversity and a peaceful transition of power are being established. We in Iraq are also working to strengthen the foundations of the culture of human rights in all sectors, so as to ensure that all Iraqis, from different ethnic, religious and sectarian backgrounds, enjoy their basic rights as stated in the Constitution.

As part of the efforts made by the Iraqi Government to determine the fate of missing victims in mass graves, the Ministry of Human Rights is preparing, in collaboration with the Institute of Forensic Medicine and the Martyrs Association, to launch a national campaign in all Iraqi provinces and the Kurdistan region aimed at establishing a national database for victims in mass graves using DNA samples to identify them. In that context, on 24 October the Ministry of Human Rights signed a memorandum of understanding with the Institute of Forensic Medicine and the Martyrs Association to establish an organizational structure in order to begin the process of identifying victims in mass graves.

The Iraqi Government has endeavoured to assist social groups that are less fortunate, especially the disabled. The Ministry of Human Rights announced its readiness to hold training sessions in sign language at

Iraqi national institutions in order to support the deaf and enable them to perform their role in society.

The Iraqi Government is also endeavouring to spread and establish the culture of human rights. The National Institute of Human Rights, along with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, organized, on 18 October 2011, an advanced training session for human rights professors at Mosul University.

The Iraqi Minister of Human Rights stated, during his meeting with Mr. Francisco Mota, Director of the Human Rights Office of UNAMI, on 12 October 2011, that the Ministry was conducting regular visits to detention centres and prisons. Those visits are welcomed by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Supreme Judicial Council. The Minister also expressed the Ministry's readiness to arrange for joint visits with the UNAMI Human Rights Office to Iraqi detention centres and prisons to evaluate the human rights situation there. For his part, Mr. Mota pointed out that he had contacted Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to view the reports that they had issued, and he stressed the need for the statistics and information included therein to be accurate.

The political changes and reform movement that began within the context of the Arab Spring prove, without any doubt, that we have selected the correct political process in Iraq since 2003. They also prove that Iraq has been a pioneer in achieving political change and in adopting democracy through elections and the peaceful transfer of power as a process for political life in the new Iraq.

Iraq asserts the importance of holding the Arab Summit Conference in Baghdad on the designated date at the end of March next year, as we have completed all the preparations and finished all the necessary projects for holding the Summit. My Government believes that it is the time to hold the Arab Summit because it is very important to the Arab world after the changes that have taken place in the region. That imposes a duty on Iraq, in line with its leading role, to face the changes in the region in order to find appropriate Arab solutions to deal with the situation in a way that meets the aspirations and hopes of the Arab people.

The Government of Iraq, based on its deep belief in people's right to express aspirations and choose their legitimate representatives, voted on 16 September in favour of the General Assembly resolution that accepts the credential documents of the Libyan National Transitional Council as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people to the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 66/1). That was preceded by my Government's recognition of the Libyan National Transitional Council as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people.

I would like to point out that the Council of Ministers, as part of its support for the democratic changes in the region, issued a decision at its meeting on 19 October to send a delegation from the Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission to Tunisia, headed by Mr. Faraj Al-Haidary, Chair of the Board of Commissioners of the Commission, to express solidarity with the Tunisian people in their elections. The Council of Ministers also decided to provide $1 million as a contribution to the success of that election.

Despite the challenges that it faces, Iraq is committed to its humanitarian role in the world in times of disasters and crises. That was reflected in the Iraqi Government's decision to donate $10 million to help the victims of the earthquake in Japan and by its decision of 25 August to donate 22,500 tons of wheat and $5 million to support the efforts of the Somali Government in fighting the effects of drought and hunger in the Horn of Africa. My Government also donated $2 million to finance the activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

Iraq is committed to respecting the sovereignty of neighbouring countries and to not allowing the use of Iraqi territories to attack neighbouring countries. In that regard, I would like to point out the statement of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 20 October that denounced the terrorist attacks by armed groups affiliated with the Kurdish Workers Party on Turkish towns near the Iraqi border. At the same time, the Iraqi authorities condemn the bombardment by Turkish and Iranian forces of Kurdish villages on the border of the two countries, which caused civilian causalities.

We would like to affirm that Iraq is committed to solving all unresolved issues with our neighbour Kuwait. I would like to assure the Council that there is positive collaboration between the Iraqi and Kuwaiti Governments to settle all unresolved issues between the two countries that were the result of Saddam

Hussein's aggression against Kuwait and his invasion in 1990. As Mr. Kobler said, he was encouraged by the goodwill of the two countries. I reaffirm my country's commitment to resolving the remaining issues under the framework of the related resolutions adopted by the Security Council. I also affirm that the relationship between Iraq and Kuwait is developing positively.

In that context, I would like to point out the approval in August by the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers to establish a committee to coordinate efforts regarding the Kuwaiti national archives. The committee is chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and its membership comprises representatives of the Council of Ministers, the Ministries of Defence, Interior, Finance, Justice, Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Central Bank of Iraq.

Regarding the port of Mubarak, we assert that we are dealing with the issue of the port through official channels and collaboration with the Kuwaiti side. I would like to point out that Prime Minister of Iraq Nuri al-Maliki announced his acceptance of an invitation from the Kuwaiti Prime Minister, Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, and stated that he intended to visit Kuwait this month. However, the visit was postponed after the resignation of the Kuwaiti Prime Minister.

We affirm that Iraq has achieved great progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, resulting in the adoption of resolution 1957 (2010), which lifted all restrictions and sanctions imposed on Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait. That has paved the way for Iraq to return to the international community. That was affirmed by the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons during his meeting with Mr. Hoshyhar Zebari, Foreign Minister of Iraq, in The Hague on 7 September, when he stated that he valued the complete cooperation of Iraq in fulfilling its obligations as a member of the Organisation. He also affirmed the cooperation of the competent Iraqi authorities to close the file on weapons of mass destruction. He expressed his appreciation of Iraq's supportive and positive role in getting rid of such weapons.

I would also like to mention the successful visit by the inspection team of the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons from 1 to 5 May, the assertion of the head of the inspection team of the success of the visit at all levels and his praise of Iraq's flexibility.

I would also like to mention the letter dated 3 December 2011, sent by Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari to the Secretary-General and, through him, to the members of the Security Council, regarding the steps taken by Iraq to implement its obligations under resolution 1957 (2010). In that letter, Mr. Zebari mentioned decision No. 119 of the Council of Ministers, dated 12 April, to approve the first stage of the removal process for the decommissioned Al-Muthanna facility, which was used by Saddam Hussein's regime to produce chemical weapons. The Council of Ministers also designated approximately $5 million for the project. The letter also discussed Iraq's outstanding cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency inspection team.

With regard to Camp Ashraf, which was addressed in detail by Mr. Kobler, I would like to assure the Security Council that my Government does not want to force anyone to return to Iran. Moreover, we believe that approximately 900 of the residents hold dual nationality. We very much encourage them to go back to the countries of which they hold the nationality. The relocation decision, which will be implemented by the end of the year, will help the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to interview the people in the camp and to decide of their own free will what they intend to do.

With the camp residents preventing the Iraqi forces and Government from entering, we do not know exactly what is going on. That is Iraq's sovereignty. There is no country in the world that, with respect to sovereignty, allows people to be in the country without that country's authority. However, we believe that we need the help of the countries and members of the Security Council to assist us in taking some of the residents of the camp so that we can conclude this issue once and for all. According to our Constitution, we cannot allow any group inside Iraq that attacks neighbouring countries. That will cause great problems.

In conclusion, I would like to affirm my Government's appreciation for the role performed by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and for the efforts of the Special Representative in providing the support requested by the Iraqi Government, in

accordance with the mechanisms agreed upon by the two parties.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.